

FILE NO: A2004-0654

TITLE: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

POLICY OWNER: STRATEGY AND ENVIRONMENT SECTION MANAGER

1. PURPOSE:

1.1 Port Stephens Council is committed to leading an integrated and collaborative approach to the delivery of a vibrant and liveable place supporting economic growth. This policy outlines Council's role in delivering the following key outcomes:

- 1.1.1 Enabling business growth.
- 1.1.2 Attracting events to drive economic benefit.
- 1.1.3 Increasing overnight visitor spend.
- 1.1.4 Creating people friendly spaces.

2. CONTEXT/BACKGROUND:

2.1 Port Stephens is a significant economic hub and forms part of the Hunter Region, the largest regional economy in Australia. The Port Stephens' economy has a diverse industry and employment base built around our natural assets. Well established manufacturing, defence and aviation facilities together with access to markets in Sydney, the Hunter and the Port of Newcastle, are key strengths.

2.2 Location and access to transport infrastructure creates a strong competitive advantage for Port Stephens, with key linkages to national markets via the M1 Pacific Motorway, Pacific Highway Corridor and New England Highway. These transport networks support a robust manufacturing sector at Tomago leading in metals manufacturing, heavy engineering, and light industrial.

2.3 Newcastle Airport is located in Port Stephens and is well recognised as a major economic driver for the Hunter, with over 1.2 million passengers per year and international capability to increase visitation to the area.

2.4 This influence however, does not occur in isolation and key to the growth of the Port Stephens economy is the development of strong partnerships with business, State and Federal agencies, industry organisations and neighbouring Councils.

2.5 This Port Stephens Economic Development and Tourism Strategy 2019-2021 and associated actions aligns directly to this policy along with federal and state government strategies aimed at increasing regional economic development including:

- 2.5.1 Hunter Regional Plan.
- 2.5.2 Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan.
- 2.5.3 Hunter Regional Economic Development Strategy.
- 2.5.4 NSW Visitor Economy Industry Action Plan.
- 2.5.5 Destination Sydney Surrounds North Destination Management Plan.

3. SCOPE:

- 3.1 Port Stephens Council understands the critical role it plays in the development of a strong and stable economy. The day to day role of council has a fundamental effect on the ability to attract investment and grow the local economy. Core functions include land use planning, procurement, public asset management, development application processing time, environmental management and the design of our public spaces.
- 3.2 Council will lead industry with a focused approach to the delivery of economic development outcomes, build capacity in the local business community, facilitate employment opportunities and increase the wellbeing of the resident population. In order to achieve this Council will:
 - 3.2.1 Implement the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy.
 - 3.2.2 Support the growth of business through evidence based decision making, advocacy and business networks with clear outcomes.
 - 3.2.3 Invest directly in local business initiatives.
 - 3.2.4 Provide ongoing financial and strategic support to Destination Port Stephens to allow the organisation to implement programs to grow overnight visitor spend.
 - 3.2.5 Coordinate the Economic Development Advisory Panel (EDAP).
 - 3.2.6 Work in partnership with key stakeholders to attract and deliver events, educate Council and the community on the value of events and seek funding to deliver events.
 - 3.2.7 Develop strategic plans to guide the sustainable growth of the visitor economy, encourage the development of high quality tourism product and experiences and build trust and understanding of the strategic value of the visitor economy.
 - 3.2.8 Build partnerships with Newcastle Airport, neighbouring councils and key stakeholders to deliver economic development outcomes.
 - 3.2.9 Promote placemaking processes and partnerships, activate public spaces and support a place-led approach to design and development.

4. DEFINITIONS:

Economic Development Activity to enable sustainable growth, provides infrastructure and services, and directed at job retention and creation.

Place Management A coordinated, place-based, multi-stakeholder approach to improve locations, harnessing the skills, experiences and resources of those in the private, public, and community sectors. This is a collaborative approach with the aim of making places better.

5. POLICY STATEMENT:

5.1 Port Stephens Council will build relationships, grow trust and create connections to support the development of a strong local economy with a focus on the following outcomes:

- 5.1.1 Make business growth easier.
- 5.1.2 Attract events that drive economic benefit.
- 5.1.3 Increase overnight visitor spend.
- 5.1.4 Create people friendly spaces.

6. POLICY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- 6.1 The Economic Development and Tourism unit is responsible for the development of a strategy aligned to this policy, monitoring, reviewing and providing advice on the policy across the organisation.
- 6.2 The EDAP will hold the Economic Development unit accountable for this delivery of this strategy objectives.

7. RELATED DOCUMENTS:

- 7.1 Port Stephens Community Strategic Plan
- 7.2 Port Stephens Economic Development and Tourism Strategy
- 7.3 Hunter Regional Plan
- 7.4 Greater Hunter Metropolitan Plan
- 7.5 Hunter Region Economic Development Strategy
- 7.6 Visitor Economy Industry Action Plan
- 7.7 Destination Sydney Surrounds North Destination Management Plan
- 7.8 Tourism Policy

CONTROLLED DOCUMENT INFORMATION:

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Process owner	Strategy and Environment Section Manager		
Author	Economic Development and Tourism Coordinator		
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Adoption date	25 November 2014		

VERSION HISTORY:

Version	Date	Author	Details	Minute No.
1	25 November 2014	Economic Development Manager	Original policy adopted by Council.	306
2	11 June 2019	Economic Development and Tourism Coordinator	Reviewed the previous Policy (Economic Development Policy), included numbering to each paragraph and updated the version control. Substantial re-write of the Policy which necessitates replacing the existing Policy dated November 2014. Intent of existing Policy remains unchanged.	119